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AUTHOR Ohta, Amy Snyder
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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the dynamics of second language classroom dyadic interactions in which one participant assumes the expert role and one the novice role. The study was conducted in a university-level Japanese language class, in which pairs were videotaped doing role play; analysis focused on one particular pair playing the roles of a teacher and a student. Activities and language indexing levels of expertise were examined, and factors relating to the social, institutional, or historical setting that could impact the constitution of participants as expert or novice were also explored. Results of the analysis, with excerpts from their transcribed interaction, are discussed here. It is concluded that while a particular form in a particular context may be seen as indexing an expert or novice role, examination of multi-turn interaction reveals that the constitution of expert-novice in learner-learner interaction may be mutually constituted, or negotiated, by the learners. Through this negotiation of intersubjectivity, both learners have the opportunity to use the target language for a genuine purpose, learning how to link language, context, and task in conversation with another who may have a different situation definition and different goals for the interaction. (Contains 29 references.) (MSE)

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INDEXICALITY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE EXPERT-NOVICE RELATIONSHIP IN PAIR WORK

Presented at the Annual Conference of the American Association of Applied Linguistics
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AMY SNYDER OHTA
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
aohta@u.washington.edu

Asian Languages & Literature
Box 353521
Seattle, WA 98195

This paper applies sociocultural theory in an examination of the constitution of expert and novice by teachers and students in learner-learner and teacher-learner interaction during a pair-work role play activity. Analysis works to identify features of learner and teacher language use which index higher and lower levels of expertise in analysis of interaction between two learners of different proficiency levels and between teacher and learner in turn-by-turn talk during meaning-making activity. This paper has two goals, to broadly define features of the data which index expert-novice roles, and to present a microanalysis of the constitution of expert-novice roles occurring within the process of negotiating intersubjectivity. This paper does not attempt to determine what features of the interaction have a positive impact L2 acquisition, nor does it make pedagogical recommendations--the purpose of this paper is to examine the constitution of expert-novice roles in learner-learner interaction from a sociocultural theoretic perspective. Previous papers (Ohta 1995a, 1996) apply sociocultural theory to an examination of how learner-learner interaction promotes acquisition of the target language.

Theoretically, the analysis is situated in the tradition of sociocultural theory, incorporating language socialization theory (Ochs 1990, Ochs & Schieffelin 1984), and sociocultural theory (Vygotsky 1978, 1987; Lantolf 1994, 1995; Donato 1988, 1994), perspectives which stress the importance of the interactive practices which constitute language acquisition and transmission of language, culture, and knowledge. Participation in interactive practices is not only the goal of language acquisition, but such participation also serves as a source of linguistic, cognitive, and social development. The participation which leads development is at times peripheral, at times active. Just as in native-native interaction, language is a tool used by interlocutors in the making of meaning.

For sociocultural theorists, participants in conversations are viewed not as passive 'comprehenders' of input, but as active in negotiation of much more than the meaning of particular linguistic units (Donato 1994, Lantolf 1989, Hall & Brooks 1995, Swain 1995). Language and language use embody far more than propositional content, and negotiation of input to make it comprehensible is not viewed as the primary feature of learner-learner discourse. While negotiation of trouble-sources a feature of both L1 and L2 discourse (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks 1977) and negotiation of meaning certainly does increase participant comprehension (Pica 1994), what is negotiated in interaction moves beyond the meaning of particular linguistic units to the roles of participants, situation definitions, and the goals and direction of the ongoing jointly constructed activity itself, in other words, the negotiation of intersubjectivity[1] (Wertsch 1985, Rommetveit 1974, 1979). In interactional activity, individuals with different histories, expectations, background knowledge, abilities and goals for the activity work not only to understand each other, but also to fulfill their

[1]Regarding negotiation of intersubjectivity, Wertsch (1985) explains: "When interlocutors enter into a communicative context, they may have different perspectives or only a vague interpretation of what is taken for granted and what utterances are intended to convey. Through semiotically mediated 'negotiation,' however, they create a temporarily shared social world, a state of intersubjectivity" (p. 161).

own conceptions of what is to take place through use of the very linguistic building blocks which constitute the ongoing interaction. Negotiation of intersubjectivity encompasses the constitution of expert-novice roles, as interlocutors use language to constitute and display their levels of expertise, working to control the interaction through their language use. Negotiation examined from this broader perspective has theoretical significance not only to comprehension of input, but to how learners construct tasks and their own roles through L2, using their developing language competence to negotiate task and create their own meanings. Through negotiation of intersubjectivity learners are able to use their L2 to impact the emerging interaction, linking L2 meanings with real world results, and shaping the resultant discourse through their language use.

In considering first (Ochs 1988, Schieffelin & Ochs 1986) and L2 acquisition (Ohta 1993, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1996; Hall 1995) as a process of socialization, the expert-novice relationship has been considered a vehicle through which language (including cultural and linguistic knowledge as well as interactive practices) is acquired by novices (Ochs 1990, Ochs & Schieffelin 1984). Socialization, however, is not a unidirectional phenomenon; even when actual levels of expertise are quite disparate, as between adult and child (Ochs 1988), or apprentice and master artisan (Lave & Wenger 1989) novices, as active participants in social activity, also impact and transform social interaction through their participation (Ochs 1990). In fact, expert and novice roles are neither fixed nor pre-determined, but vary with the differing expertises of the interlocutors as constituted by language in turn by turn interaction. While language socialization of L2 learners can be viewed via the framework of teacher='expert' and student='novice,' (Ohta 1993, 1994), peers also constitute themselves as experts or novices through their interaction with one another in both L2 and L1 contexts (Ohta 1995a, Jacoby & Gonzales 1991). Peer interaction, therefore, has implications for the acquisition of knowledge, including the acquisition of language and culture, as novices themselves contribute their differing levels of expertise to the interaction. Adult L2 learner-learner interaction presents a particularly interesting context through which to examine the constitution of the expert-novice relationship, complicated as it is by the fact that the interlocutors themselves, although fully functioning adults, are operating using linguistic tools with which they are not yet proficient. Varying levels of proficiency with these interactional tools, however, do not preclude participants from working to exercise control over the interaction as roles, meanings, and tasks are negotiated.

The Data

A 100-minute second-year university-level Japanese class at an urban American state university was audio and video recorded, with a 30-minute session including a role play pair work activity transcribed for analysis. The video camera was positioned to record learner interaction and activity, with microphones for audio recording attached to the video camera at the front of the classroom and to Becky, a student volunteer. Clipping a microphone to Becky enabled collection of interaction during pair work. The class consisted of a heterogeneous group (Table 1) of seven students (2 female and 5 male) who were in the 2nd year class either because they had successfully completed previous courses, or because previous non-academic background in the language was insufficient for them to be placed at a higher level because lacked literacy skills. Except for its small size, this class was ordinary as compared to other Japanese classes at this particular university, which is one of the most ethnically diverse in the nation.

Table 1: The Students

NAME	AGE	HOME LANGUAGES	GREW UP IN: (COUNTRY)	EDUCATED IN:	UNIVERSITY-LEVEL JAPANESE
Becky	20	Tagalog & English	U.S.	English	1st & 2nd[2] year
Rita	18	Amharic & English	Ethiopia, Japan, U.S.	English	placed in 2nd year
Ken	17	English	U.S.	English, Japanese (pre-school only)	placed in 2nd year
Joe	22	English & Japanese	U.S.	English	1st & 2nd year
Hal	33	Chinese	Taiwan	Chinese	1st & 2nd year in 1980's. Repeating 2nd year (as a grad student)
Mark	27	Chinese	Taiwan	Chinese	1st year (completed 2 years earlier, jr. college). 2nd year.
Sam	20	Vietnamese & English	Vietnam, U.S.	English	1st & 2nd year

Analysis of the data focuses upon Becky (age 20) and Mark (age 27), Becky's partner for the role play activity. The particular pairing of Becky and Mark provided the opportunity to examine interaction in an asymmetrical pairing of a learner with weaker language skills (Mark) with a learner of higher L2 proficiency (Becky). Observations of Becky and Mark's classes as well as interviews in Japanese between both learners and the researcher[3] reveal that these two learners are very different in terms of what they can do with Japanese. While Becky actively experiments with Japanese and is able to express herself in the L2 at a level that might be expected from a second year student, Mark's progress is slower. Having taken a year off between first and second year Japanese, Mark struggles not only to put together sentences, but even to recall basic lexical items. Becky expresses herself with fluency, while Mark struggles with words.

The Task:

In the data, the learners practice a role-play activity introduced by their teacher. The role play has two parts--the part of 'teacher' and the part of 'student. The teacher outlines two turns for this role play: A polite request from student to teacher, and an acceptance or refusal of the request by the teacher. Demonstrations, teacher-fronted practice, and the grammar explanation make it clear that students are to use a particular structure (V*te* + *itadakitai n desu ga*) for the request. Acceptance and response are also modeled.

Analysis

For Vygotsky, social interaction works on more than one level, two being the between-people level which consists interaction between individuals in dyads or groups (which Vygotsky terms 'interpsychological,'), and the societal or social institutional level (Wertsch 1985, Holzman & Newman 1993). These two levels are not considered to be discrete, but represent a dynamic continuum . Both interpersonal and social institutional[4] levels have implications for the constitution of expert-novice roles, with the data, examined to determine which activities might work to constitute a participant as 'expert' or 'novice.'

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[2]On this chart ' 2nd year' means that the students are currently enrolled in the third quarter of 2nd year.
[3]Interviews in Japanese, observation of their class, and the experience of the researcher teaching Becky and Mark in previous courses show Becky to more proficient in Japanese than Mark.
[4]Thanks to James Dorsey (personal communication) for productive discussion of these factors.

On the interpsychological level, this analysis involved examination of how candidate activities functioned in sequential context. Analysis revealed that certain activities, such as the use of repair, questions, or repetition, may index either the expert or novice role depending on the particular context of use. Generally speaking, while the role of expert is indexed by displays of knowledge, an interlocutor's reliance on the assistance, whether explicit or implicit, of a more able other works to constitute the participant as a novice. Table 2 lists factors on the interpsychological level which may work to constitute an interlocutor as expert or novice.

Table 2: Activities indexing levels of expertise in the foreign language classroom

ACTIVITY	LEVEL OF EXPERTISE INDEXED:
Prompting	expert (speaker uses rising intonation and/or lengthening of final syllable to prompt interlocutor to repeat and continue)
Instructions	expert (speaker instructs interlocutor(s) to do something)
Repair (NTRI)	expert (Trouble-source is an error to be corrected.) novice (Trouble-source is something causing comprehension difficulty)
Follow-up Evaluation	expert
Explicit correction	expert
Confirming correctness of one's own utterance	novice (May be in the form of a question to the teacher or another student. Rising intonation (see below) also serves this function.
Rising intonation at intonation unit boundary	novice (note: a different sort of rising intonation may also index expertise when used as a prompt--see above)
Repetition of another's utterance	novice expert (when repetition used as a correction device)

Displays of knowledge such prompting, giving instructions, use of repair, follow-up evaluation, or explicit correction all may work to constitute the speaker as expert. In the same way, activities which index the novice's reliance on the expertise of another, such as the use of confirmation questions, rising intonation, or repetition of another's utterances may work to constitute the speaker as a novice. These are general tendencies--analysis of each case reveals that things are not as clear cut as this dichotomy might indicate. While certain activities--for example, use of the follow-up turn of the IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow-up (Ohta 1993, 1994; Mehan 1985)) activity as a place to evaluate one's interlocutor--present clear-cut cases which constitute the one who so uses the turn as expert, things are not so clear for other activities. Use of repair may index differing levels of expertise. The sequential context of the repair must be carefully examined to determine how the repair functions and what it indicates. Determining the role of repair in constitution of expert-novice roles is difficult because examining utterances in context does not reveal, for example, whether need for repair was prompted by a perceptual problem or a lack of language proficiency. Whatever prompted a repair, however, it has a particular impact on the ongoing discourse which may reveal expert-novice roles. The interlocutor whose utterance is repaired does not know why repair was initiated, but through his or her response may construct herself as expert or novice. Repair indexes expertise when used as a way of correcting an error in language use made by another interlocutor. The same repair activity, however, may also work to constitute an interlocutor as 'novice' when use of a repair strategy results in repetition of an utterance needed to understand the utterance due to an inability to understand vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, or other such trouble-source. Unlike use of repair as a correction strategy, the novice uses repair to compensate for difficulty in understanding the interlocutor.

Factors related to the social, institutional, or historical setting which impact the constitution of participants as expert or novice were also examined. The institutional

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classroom setting brings with it a variety of defined roles, including the role of the teacher which in itself constitutes a participant as 'expert.' This role may, depending on the history of classroom structure in a certain institution, academic subject, or the teacher's use of her role (which, over time, transforms the historical development of the classroom setting), be available to students as well. Sociohistorical factors related to gender and age may also work to constitute a participant as expert--a participant's gender or age may impact how an individual works to constitute him or herself in terms of expertise [illegible]nding certain participants to constitute themselves as expert or novice indepen[illegible]heir actual levels of expertise. These factors are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Social, historical or institutional variables which may index differing levels of expertise

INSTITUTIONALLY/HISTORICALLY DEFINED VARIABLES	
Gender of interlocutors	May index either expert or novice depending on sociohistoric factors impacting perceptions of the relationship between gender and expertise
Age of interlocutors	May index either expert or novice depending on sociohistoric factors impacting perceptions of the relationship between age and expertise
Institutionally defined student/teacher roles	Teacher is institutionally defined as 'expert' Students are institutionally defined as 'novices' in the presence of the teacher-expert.
Institutional setting	Historically defined notions of the 'classroom' impact how participants constitute their roles in activities.

Social institutional variables alone, however, do not constitute an individual as expert or novice. Regardless of the roles triggered by a particular institutional context or sociocultural variable, individuals must also work interactionally to constitute their own expert or novice roles. A teacher, for example, may be unable to interactionally constitute his or her own expertise if he or she lacks qualities considered prerequisite to the role of teacher-expert. And, while the student role is, by definition, a novice role, students may constitute themselves as experts both in relation to peers as well as to the teacher. And, while sociohistorical variables may entitle a person of a particular gender to an expert role, and the individual may interactionally work to constitute him or herself as such, this work may ultimately fail if he or she lacks subject matter knowledge or lags behind in skill acquisition. However, how social institutional variables actually impact actual learner-learner interaction remains a matter for speculation

Collaborative learning activities have their own implications for expert-novice roles, because the teacher takes on a facilitative rather than an authoritative role during such activities. While the teacher exercises a level of control via creation of context and task design, once a collaborative activity actually begins expert-novice roles must be co-constructed by the learners themselves through language in turn-by-turn interaction. The teacher remains in the role of teacher-expert, but the role changes subtly as the teacher ceases to be the allocator of turns, and gives a measure of control over to the learners. The teacher takes on a new, support role, moving about the classroom offering assistance to pairs. In the next section, data will be presented which shows how such roles may be constituted in learner-learner interaction.

Negotiation of intersubjectivity and the constitution of expert-novice

I would like to propose that negotiation of expert-novice roles is a part of the broader process of negotiating intersubjectivity. The discourse reveals that Mark and

Becky have disparate but overlapping views of what their task is, and what their roles are within their respective tasks. They must coordinate goals and roles in order to work together. The excerpt provided for analysis here clearly shows the complexities involved, and how constitution of expert-novice and negotiation of task are interwoven in the web of learner-learner discourse.

As pair work begins, Mark and Becky at first stick fairly close to the assigned role play, with few creative embellishments. With each successive pass through the role play, however, divergent situation definitions appear to emerge. While Mark works to stick closely to the role play as defined by the teacher, Becky seems to broadly define the task as using Japanese within and beyond the role play structure. With each successive pass through the role play, the number of turns it takes for them to complete their role plays dramatically increases, mostly due to Becky's inclusion of talk in Japanese about topics beyond the assigned role play, and her inclusion of descriptive and affective language not formally laid out by the teacher.

The excerpt presented here represents Mark and Becky's final pass through the role play. It begins as their fourth run through the role play has, in Mark's estimation, just been successfully completed, with Becky (in the 'teacher' role in the role play) having just agreed to Mark's request to teach him ice skating. As their talk continues we see Mark working to control the interaction both through directives and active definition of his own role. He works to get Becky to participate in another pass through the role play. However, Becky is still working on the role play just completed, and keeps the interaction focused on her own agenda, more broadly defined than Mark's. Negotiation of intersubjectivity comes into clear view, as we see these two learners working at cross-purposes, each through their language use moving the discourse towards their own task definitions--Mark to begin a new role play, and Becky to construct a creative expansion of the previous role play which is, to her, still in progress. Both work to carve out their own roles within the emerging discourse. The results are a sort of tug-of-war, in which the victor is the one with the greater linguistic resources. To highlight utterances particularly involved in negotiation of intersubjectivity, I used bullets (•) and asterisks (*) to note Becky's and Mark's contributions, respectively.

• 1 B: Hai. Watashi wa tak- okane ga takusan arimasu.
Yes. I have a lot of money.

2 M: Takusan arimasu?
A lot of money?

3 B: Hai soo desu.
Yes, that's right.

4 M: (Hontoo) ni? Hontoo ni?
Really?

• 5 B: Hai. Watashi wa yasashii desu. (laughs)
Yes. I am very nice.

6 M: Ah. Shinsetsu desu ka?
Oh. You are kind?

7 B: Watashi shinsetsu.
I am kind.

* 8 M: Tenisu (ss-) (.) Tenisu o um oshiete- ta- oshiete itada-
Tennis (ss) (.) I would like to have you teach me tennis-

9 B: Tenisu?
Tennis?

10 M: Hai. tenisu.
Yes. Tennis

• 11 B: Anata wa heta desu ne?
You're bad at it, right?

12 M: (.)

13 B: Anata wa heta desu.
You are bad at it.

14 M: Hai.
Yes.

15 B: Tenisu ga heta desu.
You are bad at tennis.

16 M: Watakushi?
Me?

17 B: Hontoo?
Really?

18 M: Watashi wa dame desu ne:.
I'm really no good am I.

19 B: Aa soo desu ka. Sore wa zannen deshita ne::.
Oh, is that so. That was too bad.

* 20 M: Hajimete.
Start.

21 B: Hai so.
Yes, that's right.

22 M: Hai.
Yes.

23 B: Ii desu yo.
Okay, I will.

24 M: Ii desu yo. Hai. Doomo arigatoo.
Okay. Yes. Thank you.

• 25 B: Hai. Okane ga takusan arimasu. Tenisu ga (.) ressun-
Yes. I have a lot of money. Tennis (.) lesson-

* 26 M: Watakushi wa seito desu.
I am the student.

27 B: Ano. Hai. Okane wa?
Um. Okay. Do you have money?

At first, Becky constitutes herself as a magnanimous rich person who is going to teach Mark ice skating (the request she just agreed to in the immediately preceding talk). We see this in lines 1 and 5. In line 1, Becky follows up her agreement to teach Mark ice skating with a description of herself as wealthy. She is working to expand the role play beyond the parameters defined by the teacher. Mark (line 2) goes along with Becky, responding appropriately to her. Becky continues (line 5) in this self-description, creating a fictional role of herself as not only wealthy, but also kind. Mark still goes along with her in line 6, rephrasing her utterance with another lexical item. Becky follows up Mark's utterance by agreeing with him. Mark plays along with Becky until line 8, when he makes his first attempt to take control by introducing a new request modeled after the role play model. Here, he moves away from Becky's agenda and back onto the role play task as he defines it. Mark works to form the target request, this time asking for tennis lessons. In line 9, instead of immediately agreeing, Becky does an echo question--this is not 'scripted' in the assigned dialogue. However, Mark responds appropriately in line 10. Instead of then responding to Mark's request, however, in line 11 Becky moves back onto her broader agenda of the task, changing the direction of the interaction to talk about Mark's tennis ability a topic which continues until line 19.

Mark's silence in response to Becky's line 11 query--he leaves a salient pause--is evidence that he has difficulty with Becky's question. Pauses in response to questions are dispreferred--and are therefore evidence that a refusal or some other negative response is forthcoming. Even when such an utterance does not follow the pause, the pause itself serves an interactional purpose. Becky interprets Mark's pause as indicative of a comprehension problem, and repeats her question as a statement in line 13. Mark agrees, and Becky rephrases her statement. From this point, Mark goes along with Becky's line of conversation, including echo questions and rephrasing her characterization of him as bad at tennis. In line 20, however, he tries again to get back to the assigned role play. Although Becky agrees to do that, (lines 20-23) and Mark even thanks her (line 24), in line 25 Becky returns to the first topic she introduced in line 1--that she has a lot of money. Although she appears to comply with Mark's attempts to move the interaction back to his conceptualization of the task, she again deviates from what Mark clearly views as her 'script,' and Mark does not recognize her response as one that complies with his sense of what the task is. He cuts Becky off in line 26, reasserting that he is in the role of 'student' in the role play. Becky, once again, does not cooperate with Mark's attempts to control the task. She uses her superior linguistic skill to continue with her broader language play, playing in and around the assigned role play task which Mark so persistently and unsuccessfully tries to get her to limit herself to. In fact, never does succeed. After this, he finally complies with Becky's agenda and plays with Japanese in a way that is responsive to her utterances. Becky succeeds in getting Mark to cooperate with her version of the task, and they continue bantering in Japanese for about 10 more turns until the teacher stops them to announce that it is time for role play performances in front of the class.

As shown in this excerpt, maintenance of the expert role requires both the effort of the student working to maintain control as well as the cooperation of the interlocutor. Becky, with her greater linguistic flexibility, does not submit to the novice role, but continues to show her own expertise through language use through which she controls the direction of the interaction.

Concluding Remarks

This paper has worked on two levels--first to broadly define interpsychological activities and social institutional variables found in the data to index expert-novice roles, and secondly to present a microanalysis of the constitution of expert-novice roles in the process of negotiating intersubjectivity. Even as particular linguistic forms and functions can be seen to index levels of expertise, constitution of expert-novice roles is part of broader negotiation of intersubjectivity. While a particular form in a particular context may be seen as indexing an expert or novice role, examination of multi-turn interaction reveals that the constitution of expert-novice in learner-learner interaction may be mutually constituted by learners as they negotiate intersubjectivity. Through such negotiation, both learners have the opportunity to use the L2 for a genuine purpose, learning how to link language, context, and task in Japanese when in conversation with another who may have a different situation definition and different goals for the interaction. Negotiation of meaning is but a part of the process of negotiating intersubjectivity through which language learning peers meet and interact, constituting their own roles with language as they develop linguistic competence.

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